Patent Claims

Sub B3

1. A method of operating a telecommunications system comprising a switching facility and subscriber channels over which data are transmissible in packet form,

characterized in that calls from subscribers to an internet are recognized, and that in the front end of the switching facility associated with said subscribers, those packets of a plurality of subscriber channels that are to be sent to the internet are combined onto a single channel (concentrating channel).

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that two or more concentrating channels are provided, and that packets of two or more subscribers are fed into concentrating channels without fixed assignment to the subscribers.

3. A telecommunications system comprising subscriber channels over which data are transmissible in packet form, and a switching facility (10) with crosspoints each capable of switching a subscriber channel to an

outgoing channel, particularly for carrying out the method claimed in claim 1, characterized in that at least one concentrator (55, 55') is provided which combines packets of two or more subscriber channels to be sent to an internet onto at least one concentrating channel leading to the switching facility and switched via a switching path, with the number of the two or more concentrating channels being less than the number of said subscriber channels.

4. A system as claimed in claim 3, characterized by being designed to also transmit voice signals on the subscriber lines.

A 5. A system as claimed in claim 3 ~~or 4,~~ characterized in that a distribution unit (destination unit 80) is provided which distributes combined packets to two or more channels, particularly for routing the packets to at least one service provider determined by a destination address.

A 6. A system as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claim~~s~~ 3 ~~to 5~~, characterized in that it is an ISDN system.

7. A concentrator suitable for use in a method as claimed
A in claim 1 ~~or 2 and/or in a system as claimed in any~~
A ~~one of claims 3 to 6~~, characterized by comprising at least one device (90) for concentrating data incoming on two or more B channels (92) in a single outgoing channel (57) (concentrating channel).

8. A concentrator as claimed in claim 7, characterized by comprising two or more devices (90) which together control the feeding of packets into at least one

concentrating channel (57), particularly with a view to avoiding and controlling access contention.

A 9. A contentrator as claimed in claim 7 ~~or 8,~~ characterized by being switchable so as to route data not to be concentrated to associated outgoing B channels (93).